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National Forests

IN WYOMING

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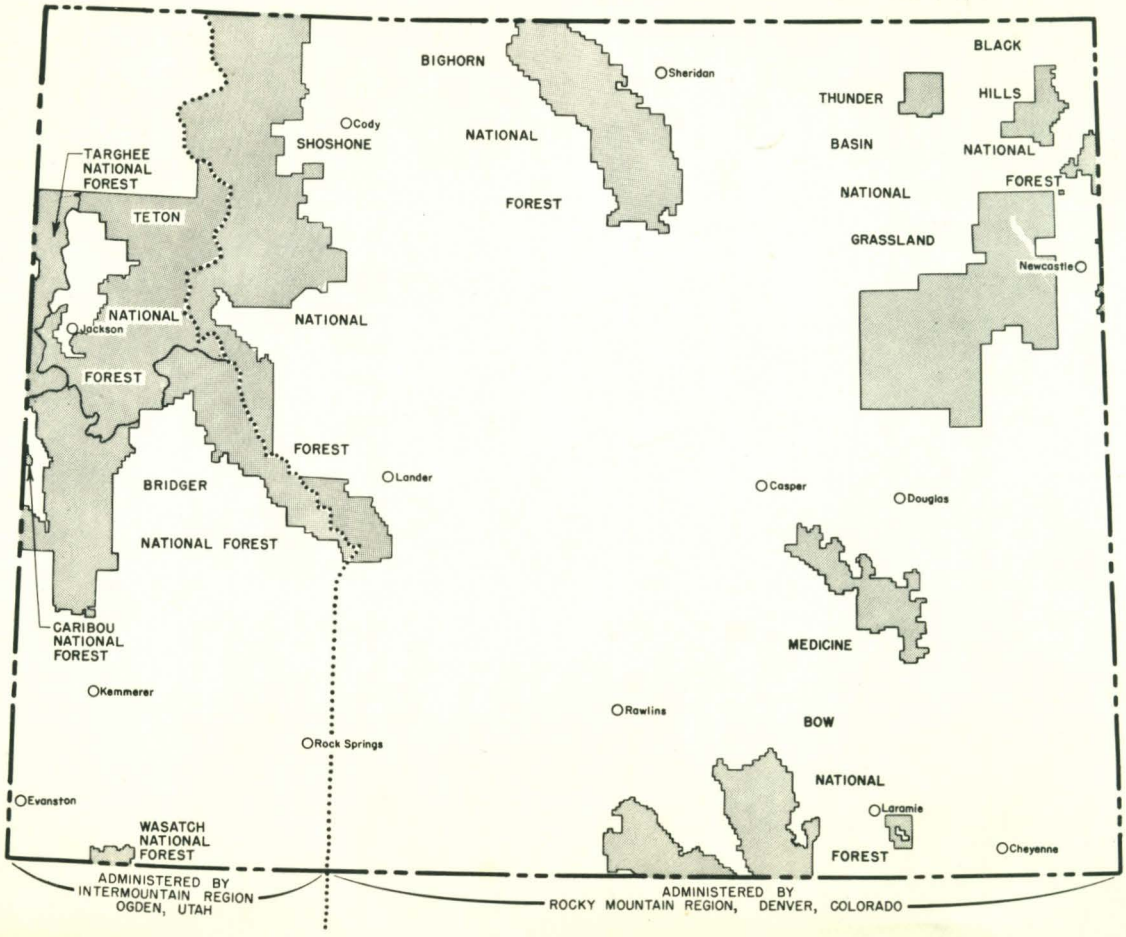
FOREST SERVICE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN & INTERMOUNTAIN REGIONS

NATIONAL FORESTS IN WYOMING



ADMINISTRATION

Regional Forester
Intermountain Region
Forest Service Building
Ogden, Utah

SUPERVISORS AT:

Bridger National Forest
Kemmerer, Wyoming

Teton National Forest
Jackson, Wyoming

Targhee National Forest
St. Anthony, Idaho

Caribou National Forest
Pocatello, Idaho

Wasatch National Forest
Salt Lake City, Utah

Regional Forester
Rocky Mountain Region
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado

SUPERVISORS AT:

Bighorn National Forest
Sheridan, Wyoming

Black Hills National Forest
Custer, South Dakota

Medicine Bow National Forest
Laramie, Wyoming

Shoshone National Forest
Cody, Wyoming

National Forests

IN WYOMING

Wyoming, with 9,724,000 acres of National Forest lands comprising about 16 percent of the State's land area, is richly endowed with natural renewable forest resources—water, timber, forage, recreation and wildlife. The State is wealthy also in scenic and historical attractions.

Within the State are the Shoshone, Teton, Bridger, Bighorn and Medicine Bow National Forests, plus parts of the Targhee, Caribou, Wasatch, and Black Hills National Forest.

The National Forests embrace the major portions of Wyoming's high mountain lands on both sides of the Continental Divide. This natural barrier, in fact, forms the boundary line of the Intermountain and Rocky Mountain Region of the Forest Service. These same lands are source areas for rivers flowing toward both the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. They are vital first of all for the regulated streamflow upon which depends much of Wyoming's agriculture as well as that of neighboring states. These same watersheds provide the bulk of the State's culinary water supplies either through surface flow or via underground channels.

This booklet presents today's picture of Wyoming's National Forest resources and uses, all of which are managed on a sustained-yield basis for the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run, by the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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60 1905-1965 FOREST SERVICE YEARS

NATIONAL FOREST STREAMS — Lifeline of water in the West

WATER . . .

"To rule the mountain is to rule the river." This ancient proverb describes one of the major objectives of National Forest management. Most of our water comes from the high mountain watershed areas in the National Forests. While other uses are made of these lands, they serve primarily for water production. Water may be considered the number one resource on National Forest lands.

Acting as a sponge, soaking up precipitation as it falls in the form of rain or snow, the forests discipline the water. Instead of rushing downstream to create floods, the moisture is released slowly during the summer months for on-site and downstream use.

The welfare and prosperity of Wyoming communities depend upon an adequate supply of useable, high quality water. In addition to its domestic use, Wyoming water sustains industry and agriculture, creating much of the electricity which helps keep our living standards high.

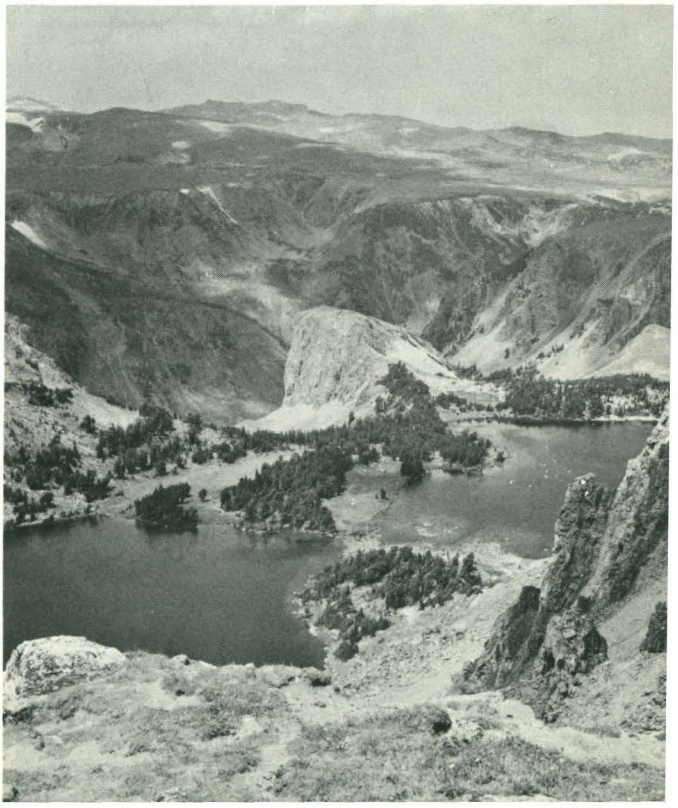
More than 8,587,000 acre feet of water pour each year from the National Forests in Wyoming. By the cupful, it would add up to 2,798,164,200,000 gallons!

In managing these watersheds, the Forest Service conducts studies to determine the effects of various plants, soil types and land uses upon the yield of water. The objective is to maintain and stabilize a suitable plant cover on the watershed to increase the yield and better the quality of water, regulate timing of streamflow, and to help prevent and control soil erosion and floods.

Deteriorated watersheds are restored by controlling erosion in gullies, channels, roads and trails; by revegetating the land; and other land treatment measures. Recently burned areas are treated by planting new vegetative cover, thus restoring the soil productivity and reducing the threat of destructive floods.

The distribution and use of water originating from National Forests is regulated by State agencies, which work closely with the Forest Service and other Federal agencies to protect the public interest.

National Forest watersheds, in addition to supplying useable water, are vital to recreation, fishing and hunting, livestock grazing, and as a source of timber and minerals. Only with sound, coordinated management can watersheds be utilized for these purposes without sacrificing watershed values.



HIGH MOUNTAIN LAKES —
Natural reservoirs of precious water

TOMORROW'S TIMBER HARVEST IS MADE POSSIBLE . . .

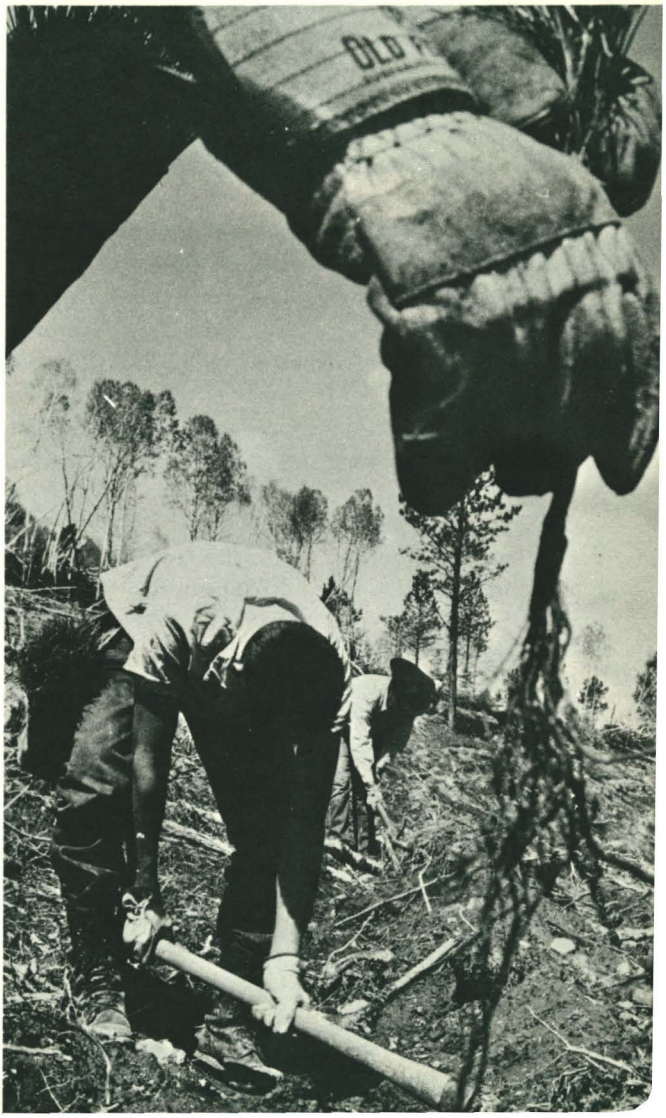
WOOD . . .

The contribution of the National Forest timber resource to the local economy in many areas of Wyoming is of major importance and will be much greater as methods of utilization and processing are developed. There are some communities within and adjacent to the National Forests of Wyoming whose economy depends almost entirely on these timber resources.

But wood, or timber, plays a diversified role in Wyoming's forests. Much of the recreational appeal of the National Forests stems from the beauty of the timbered areas. The high quality and quantity of fishing, both streams and lakes, is dependent upon the maintenance of proper forest cover. Water yields, quality, and timing of runoff are significantly affected by timber harvesting methods. Wildlife habitat and range capacities for domestic livestock also hinge on proper timber management programs. Thus, management methods of the timber resource materially affects other resources on the forests.

Many areas are not now producing the growth of which they are capable. The conversion of stagnated, overmature timber stands to young vigorous stands is of high priority. Equally important is the job of managing the immature stands for maximum production.

Until recent years wood was used almost exclusively as saw timbers, or in its natural, round form. With the advent of modern technology, wood is used in the manufacture of a diversity of products. Today's products include paper, chemicals, animal food, explosives, and plastics. Wyoming's progressive timber operators are constantly searching for new markets. Additional industrial use is needed to enhance the economy of the present timber-dependent communities.



. . . Because a seedling was planted today

FIRE —
The dramatic enemy of the forest . . .

Growth of Wyoming's timber industry is reflected in the timber sales and harvests made on National Forests. In the 10 year period from 1954 to 1964, timber sales have grown from 16.5 million board feet to 244.3 million board feet. In the same area operators harvested 62.9 million board feet in 1954, compared to 87.2 million board feet in 1963.

The principal wood-producing tree species are Englemann spruce, lodgepole pine, alpine fir, douglas-fir, and aspen.

Approximately 8 billion of the 22.6 billion board feet of commercial sawtimber in Wyoming are in the National Forests. The annual harvest of National Forest timber is important to Wyoming's economy.

Some areas have been laid bare by forest fires, insects and diseases. Reforesting these non-productive lands increases their value and usefulness, when they are put back to work growing wood and serving as recreation areas, watersheds, and cover for wildlife.

Because of its dramatic nature, fire is best known to the public as the destroyer of forests. Two enemies of the forest which cause equal or more destruction are insects and disease. The annual loss in Wyoming's pine and spruce forests from insects alone are estimated to exceed 17 million board feet. Insect control is carried out by cutting the infested trees and using the logs for lumber or by spraying the bark or needles with chemicals to kill the insects.

Diseased trees are removed to prevent the spread of infection to nearby healthy trees. More than 63,600 acres have been treated in the past 10 years.

Forest rangers also work to improve stands of timber. Young stands are tended to improve growth conditions for the desirable trees in the stand.

Four tree nurseries are operated by the Forest Service, two in Colorado, one in Nebraska, and one in Idaho. Approximately 37 million seedlings are grown by these nurseries each year. The remainder of the seedlings produced by the nurseries go to forests in other states.

Wood can be grown and harvested as a crop. When trees are cut or destroyed they are replaced either by natural seedlings or by planting or seeding. Intensive forestry is the only way the continued demand for high quality wood products can be met. The quality of growing stock (immature trees not ready for harvest) is gradually being improved through timber stand improvement work on the National Forests in Wyoming.

FIGHTING INSECTS & DISEASE — Not so dramatic, but much more costly in timber losses

FORAGE . . .

Wyoming has a nation-wide image as the "Cowboy State," and stockmen were among the first to use the National Forests. Some third-generation families are grazing cattle, sheep, and horses on the same National Forests their pioneer forefathers used.

About 2,886,415 acres of National Forests and Grasslands are open for livestock grazing. Dense timber and brush, steep slopes, unstable soils, scanty forage production or lack of water make the remaining area unsuitable for grazing.

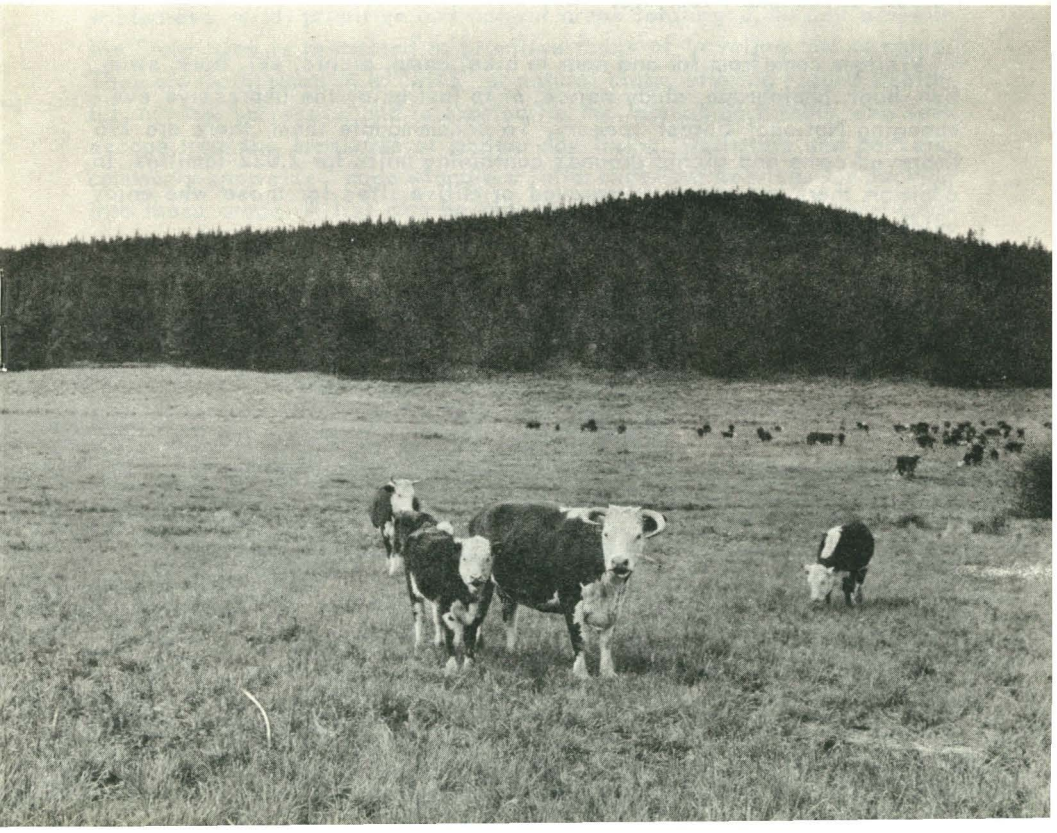
National Forest ranges in Wyoming have been divided into 808 grazing allotments for which 1,463 permits are issued. All allotments are operated under grazing management systems which are developed after careful field analysis. Plans for managing each allotment are designed to obtain optimum use of forage without damage to the range.

In accordance with management plans for National Forest range, definite livestock numbers are permitted to graze a prescribed length of time in each grazing area to provide best use of the forage. These are based on the amount of feed available, as well as conditions and trends of soil and vegetation.

Approximately 124,000 cattle and 353,000 sheep use these lands during the grazing season each year. The average length of grazing season is approximately 5 months for cattle and 3.5 months for sheep. Grazing fees are adjusted annually and vary with the current market value of forage and livestock products. Livestock grazing and big game habitat management are coordinated.

Current projects for range development are designed to maintain good watershed conditions while sustaining high production of forage. Projects include conversion of non-productive lands from brush to grass, replanting deteriorated ranges and chemical spraying to control noxious and poisonous range plants. Proper livestock distribution over the range is achieved through herding, fencing, location of salt blocks, and development of watering places. Drift fences, water developments, and other range improvements on Federal lands are financed and built by both the Forest Service and permittees.

The forage resource on the National Forests and Grasslands is of major importance in maintaining one of Wyoming's key industries. Grazing of livestock on the National Forests and Grasslands will continue to be an important National Forest use in Wyoming.



CAMPING & PICNICKING — Number One Family Adventure

RECREATION . . .

Of all the resources found on the National Forests, the general public is best acquainted with recreation. In addition to giving pleasure to millions each year, the varied recreational opportunities are an important part of Wyoming's economy. Truly "America's Playgrounds," the National Forests attract many tourists.

Visitors come from far and near to hike, camp, picnic, ski, boat, swim, fish, hunt, photograph, study nature, or to just enjoy the impressive, ever-changing National Forest scenery. To accommodate them, there are 196 improved camp and picnic grounds containing units for 2,022 families. In addition there are many unimproved primitive sites for those who enjoy wilderness camping.

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL — The wilderness adventure

Studies indicate that by 1976 this demand on the National Forests will triple, and by the year 2000 it will double again. Confronted with this overwhelming demand the Forest Service is planning ahead by selecting and reserving new recreation sites. To prepare for the growing need, these sites will be developed as rapidly as funds and manpower become available.

Through its special use permit system, the Forest Service has made possible over 21 organization camps. These camps, operated and maintained by church groups, and youth groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, 4-H and others, are used by over 21,000 persons each year.

For those who prefer the usual comforts of home, but want to visit the forests, there are 43 resorts, lodges, and dude ranches. These are owned and operated by private individuals or corporations under paid special use permits.

More and more forest visitors are making their way by foot or horseback into classified wilderness areas. These areas have been established by the Forest Service to meet the demand for undeveloped back country recreation and Wyoming has some of the most outstanding. There are 12 wilderness, wild, primitive and natural areas totaling 3,347,049 acres in the State. Use is restricted to primitive forms of traveling and camping. They are maintained in a "wild" or natural state, offering rugged, healthful, outdoor recreation and relaxation for the increasing number who seek escape from the pressures of modern day living. Outfitters and packers, commonly known as "dude wranglers" offer excellent services for packing into these areas. A list may be obtained from the Wyoming Travel Commission, Cheyenne.

The fun goes on all year 'round. Winter sports enthusiasts, predominently skiers, take advantage of 11 winter sports areas found on forests in Wyoming. Lodges and ski slope facilities are operated much the same as summer resorts under paid permit for the public's convenience.

WINTER SPORTS DEVELOPMENTS . . .
A growing economic impact in Wyoming

ELK

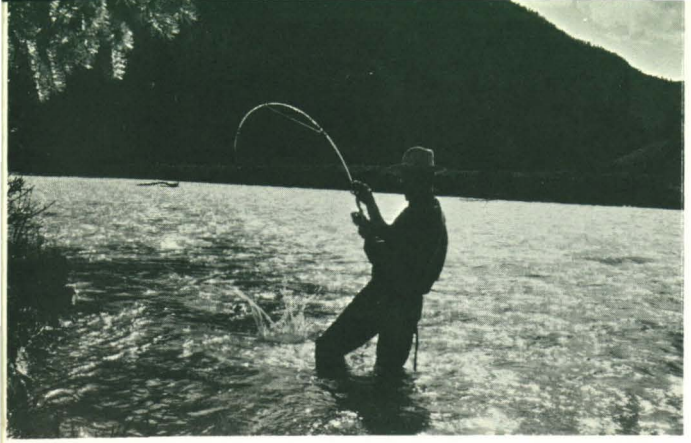
WILDLIFE . . .

Wildlife and fish resources of the National Forests in Wyoming are known throughout the United States, attracting more than 638,800 sportsmen visits annually.

Perhaps in no other area in the Nation do so many prized big game species inhabit the National Forests. In Wyoming these animals include mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, black and grizzly bear, mountain lion, antelope, bighorn sheep, and moose. In addition there are grouse, rabbits, chukar partridge and wild turkey, plus the fur-bearing animals. Many songbirds, mostly migratory, also make their presence known in the forests.

Beaver ponds, natural lakes, reservoirs and streams on National Forests provide excellent fishing and important nesting and resting areas for migrating waterfowl. A large part of the recreational use of the forests is tied to the wildlife resource.

MOOSE



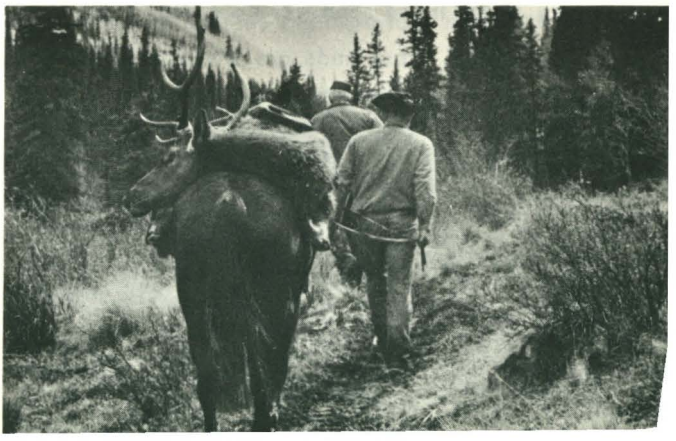
TROUT FISHING —
Leads in Wyoming wildlife harvest

Trout species found in 5,416 miles of mountain streams and 43,469 acres of ponds and lakes in the National Forests of Wyoming include the rainbow, brook, golden, cutthroat, German brown, and mackinaw. In addition, some of the "warm water" ponds and reservoirs have been stocked with pan-fish.

Hunting and fishing, with the correlated activities of outfitters, guides and other suppliers add greatly to the State's economy.

Forests work cooperatively with State Game and Fish Departments to maintain productive wildlife habitat and desired wildlife populations within the National Forests. While the Forest Service has the primary responsibility for managing wildlife habitat conditions on National Forest lands, the management of the wildlife itself, and the regulation of hunting and fishing, rests with the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission.

Fur-bearing animals attracted some of the first explorers and mountain men to Wyoming. Trapping and the fur trade remained an important industry until the early 1940's. Beaver, muskrat, mink, weasel, fox, coyote, and marten were some of the more important fur-bearers of the trapping era. Few of these animals are of great economic importance at the present time.



End of a Succestul Wyoming Elk Hunt

THUNDER BASIN NATIONAL GRASSLAND

In addition to the National Forests, Wyoming has Thunder Basin National Grassland. The grasslands are managed on the same principal as the National Forests.

Representative of areas predominately suited to grassland agriculture, these lands were originally plowed and cropped. Because of poor soil, recurrent drought or other factors, the land developed in dust bowls.

Thunder Basin National Grassland, formerly known as the Northwestern Wyoming Land Utilization Project, is located in Converse, Campbell, Weston, Niobrara and Crook Counties. The Grassland covers a gross area of approximately two million acres with Government ownership of approximately 573,000 acres.

Homestead principles developed for a humid climate farther east were misapplied to the semi-arid plains resulting in two major problems. One was the settling by many families on tracts of 160 to 640 acres that were physically and economically unfitted for cultivation. The second was settlement by an even greater number on units of one or two sections and attempting to establish livestock units. These were too small for successful operation as were the farming ventures. As a result, numerous homesteads were abandoned and the land left to unrestricted competitive use. Under these conditions a steady depletion of the land was inevitable.

National Grasslands are a sequel to bitter experience, and exemplify new thinking about agriculture and resources in grass country. Their highest purpose will be to serve as demonstration areas, showing how lands classified as unsuitable for cultivation may be converted to grass for the benefit of both land and people.

Thunder Basin National Grassland is not idle land. More than 14,000 cattle and over 20,000 sheep graze this redeemed land under permit. In addition, the same acreage supports both small and large game animals, in addition to song and game birds.

MINERALS . . .

Minerals comprise another important resource of the National Forests. Prospecting and mining are permitted by law in the National Forests except within lands withdrawn from mineral entry for special purposes. To locate and hold a mining claim, the mining laws require a discovery of a mineral having present value. Compared to earlier days, present mineral activity is minor in Wyoming's National Forests.

The Act of July 23, 1955 (Public Law 167) states that common varieties of sand, gravel, stone, pumice, pumicite, or cinders are not mineral deposits subject to location within the meaning of the mining laws. Removal of these materials may be authorized under special use permit or by lease consistent with the Mineral Materials Act of 1947 as amended.

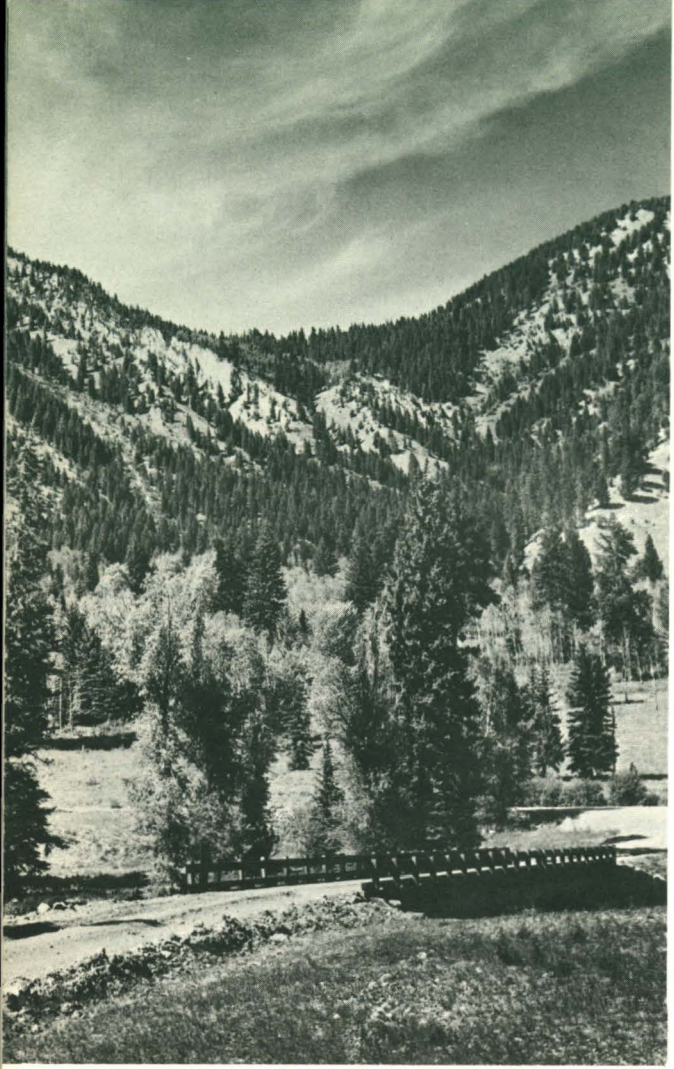
The Act of July 23, 1955 further provides that mining claims shall not be used for any purpose other than prospecting, mining, or processing operations prior to the issuance of patent. Timber may be cut from a mining claim for use in mining operations. However, such cutting shall be in accordance with sound principles of forest management, except for minimum clearing. No claimant may dispose of timber from a mining claim.

Coal, oil, gas, oil shale, sodium, phosphate, and potassium are leasing minerals and deposits may be worked only by permission from the Bureau of Land Management.

Mining claims on National Forest lands may be patented if the owner has complied with the mining laws regarding the development work and improvements, and has demonstrated a discovery of valuable mineralization. The Department of Interior has jurisdiction over the application, processing and issuance of mineral patents. Further information may be obtained from District Land Offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

While there are known mineral deposits in the National Forests of Wyoming, few may be operated profitably because operation costs equal or exceed the market values of the minerals. Nevertheless, minerals constitute an important natural resource of the National Forests and Grasslands of Wyoming, and will continue to have an important place in the management plans of these public lands.

PANNING FOR GOLD — Now a hobby



ROADS, TRAILS, BRIDGES — Important to National Forest Enjoyment & Resource Use

ROADS AND TRAILS

Seldom, if ever today, are National Forest roads and trails built for one specific purpose. The logging road of today eventually becomes the recreation roadway for tomorrow's visitor. Roads and trails, in addition to serving the logger, stockmen, and recreationist, also serve for administrative travel including fire control.

There are 6,162 miles of forest developed roads and 5,752 miles of foot and horse trails in the National Forests of Wyoming. In addition there are many county, state and federal roads. Funds are appropriated every year for road and trail maintenance. Included in this appropriation is the 10 percent of National Forest receipts returned each year for roads and trails.

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AUTHOR USFS Rocky Mountain Region
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TITLE National forests in Wyoming
1968

Janet Mcburney	JUL 15 1976		
R Scott	MAR 26 1981		

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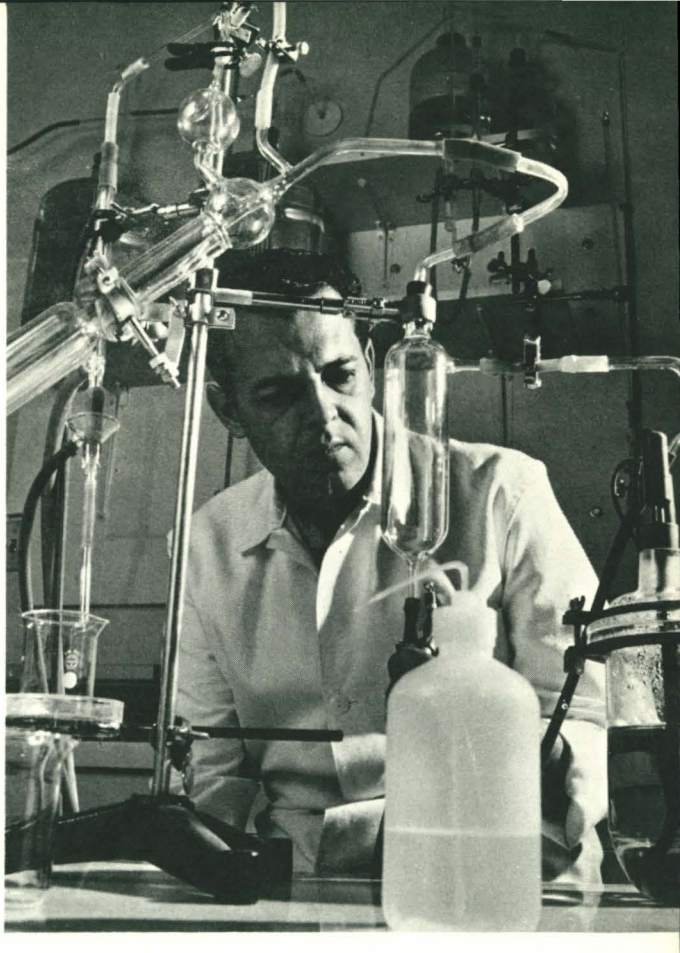
RESEARCH — Key to Forest Progress and Management



RESEARCH . . .

Sound research is necessary for efficient and progressive management of the National Forests. Forestry research east of the Continental Divide in Wyoming is carried on by Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Fort Collins, Colorado; Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, at Ogden, Utah; conducts the research program west of the Divide.

A Forest Range and Watershed laboratory centered at the University of Wyoming, Laramie, serves as one project location for the Rocky Mountain Station.

These stations work in close cooperation with other federal, state and private agencies. Their field of research covers many aspects of forestry: Insects, disease, timber management, fire, forest utilization, economics, biology, range management, wildlife habitat and watershed management.